

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, Applicant has amended claims 1, 12 and 15. Applicant respectfully submits no new matter was added by this Amendment. Accordingly, claims 1-20 are at issue.

The Examiner has objected to claim 12 because of certain informalities. Applicant has amended claim 12 in accordance with the Examiner's comments. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits this objection is now moot.

The Examiner has objected to the drawings under 37 CFR 1.83(a). Specifically, the Examiner maintains that "the 'single electrical cable connection . . . providing power' must be shown." (Office Action, p.2). Applicant respectfully submits the "single electrical cable connection on the housing" as called for in claim 1, is shown in the drawings of the present application. Referring to Figures 1 and 2, input screws 28, 30 and 32 form a connection for the hot, neutral and ground wires, respectively, from an electrical energy source (similarly, input screws 66, 68 and 70 form a connection for the hot, neutral and ground lines of an electrical energy source for the embodiment of Figure 3). As expressly set forth in the specification: "[t]he three lines (hot, neutral and ground) are collectively considered as a single cable (i.e., whether or not they are bundled or packaged together)." (Application, p. 12, line18-30). Each of the receptacle outlets in the housing is connected to the three input screws via internal buses in the housing, and thus are connected to the power source through the input screws. In other words, the housing does not have a set of three input screws for each receptacle outlet (or set of two receptacle outlets) and instead, only has the single set of hot, neutral and ground screws for all of the receptacle outlets in the housing (i.e., a single connection).

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-3, 5-6 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by King. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 1, as amended herein, is directed toward a multiplex electrical outlet for mounting in a wall having a single housing containing at least four electrical receptacle outlets in the housing. Unlike prior wall mounted multiplex outlets, all four of the electrical receptacle outlets in the housing are provided power via “a single electrical cable connection” as specifically required by claim 1. That is, the housing does not have multiple connections to the power supply. In the past, each duplex of a multiplex outlet having more than two receptacle outlets would require its own connection to the power source. This would increase the wiring as well as the installation time required to mount all of the receptacles in the wall. The invention of claim 1 removes the extra wiring and reduces installation time.

King is directed toward a modular receptacle that includes a base unit (14), and a separate mounting member (16) for securing the base unit to a junction box. (See e.g., Figures 1 and 9, col. 3, lines 62-67, of King). A removable electrical device (12) can be plugged into the base unit (14). (King, col. 4, lines 9-27). Specifically, King discloses the front cover (30) of the base (14) “includes one or more power contact through holes 40 and one or more ground contact through holes 42 . . .” to “permit the power contacts 24 and ground contact 26, extending from the rear cover 22 of the electrical device 12, to pass through the front cover 30 and engage their corresponding terminal connection 34 or ground terminal connection 44 on mounting strap 16.” (King, col. 4, lines 51-58). Figure 9 of King “shows a three gang base unit 14 that can mate with three electrical devices 12.” (King, col. 5, lines 48-52). Each of the “electrical devices 12” has its own “housing 18” and includes “power contacts 24” and a “ground contact 26” that are used to plug into the base (14). (See e.g., King, col. 4, lines 9-27). As shown in King, the electrical

device (12) can be a duplex receptacle (i.e., a device with two receptacle outlets). The base unit (14) of Figure 9 allows three separate duplex receptacles to be plugged into the base unit (14).

King does not disclose each of the elements of claim 1 as amended. The modular device disclosed in King does not have a single housing for four receptacle outlets. Instead, three separate duplexes, each having its own housing, are plugged into a base unit. These duplexes are separately removably attached to the base unit. Additionally, King does not disclose a first tab or a second tab extending from the housing. The mounting member (16) of King is shown as a separate piece that clips onto the base unit in the back of the unit. (See e.g., Figure 1 of King). Finally, King does not disclose a single electrical connection on a housing. Each of the electrical devices (12) include power contacts and ground contacts for each receptacle outlet in the housing (18). King does not disclose whether the base unit (14) of the embodiment of Figure 9, has only one connection for the power supply or whether multiple connections (i.e., one for each plug-in port) exist but are not shown. In any event, the base unit is not a housing for the receptacles.

Accordingly, because King fails to disclose each of the limitations of claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits claim 1 is not anticipated by King and is patentable over King. See *RCA Corp. v. Applied Digital Data Systems, Inc.*, 730 F.2d 1440, 1444, 221 USPQ 385, 388 (Fed. Cir. 1984) (Anticipation is established only when a single prior art reference discloses each and every element of a claimed invention.).

Claims 2-3, 5-6 and 8 depend on claim 1, either directly or indirectly, and include each of its limitations. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits claims 2-3, 5-6 and 8 are also not anticipated by and are patentable over King.

The Examiner has rejected claims 12-13 and 15-20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by French et al. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 12, as amended, is directed to a two-sided multiplex electrical receptacle that provides wall mounted outlets on both sides of a wall. Claim 12 provides for at least one receptacle outlet on each side of the wall, and “a first tab extending from the top of the housing and a second tab extending from the bottom of the housing, the first and second tabs configured for connecting the housing to a permanently secured in-wall electrical box.” Claim 13 adds a second receptacle outlet to each side of the wall.

French et al. discloses a power distribution system for use with a modular furniture unit. The power distribution system includes a “power block” positioned in the utility raceway on the bottom edge of a modular wall panel unit. (See e.g., French et al., col. 5, lines 56-68, Figure 1). The power block allows for outlet units to be removably installed on both sides of the power block. (See e.g., French et al., col. 6, lines 4-15).

Unlike the electrical receptacle of claim 12, the system in French et al. is not intended for use as a wall mounted outlet. Additionally, French et al., does not disclose tabs on the housing of the receptacles for connecting the housing to a secured in-wall electrical box. Accordingly, French et al. does not anticipate claims 12 or 13.

The Examiner has rejected claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over King as applied to claims 1-3 and further in view of case law.

As set forth above, Applicant respectfully maintains that claims 1-3 are not anticipated by King. Claim 4 claims priority from claim 3 and includes each of its limitations. Accordingly, for the reasons given above with respect to claims 1-3, Applicant respectfully submits claim 4 is patentable over King. The case law relied upon by the Examiner is not relevant to and does not effect the patentability of claims 1-3. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits claim 4 is patentable over King in view of the case law.

The Examiner has rejected claims 7 and 9-10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over King as applied to claims 1 and 5-6 and further in view of Lee et al. (Lee). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

As set forth above, Applicant respectfully maintains that claims 1 and 5-6 are patentable over King. Claims 7 and 9-10 depend on claim 1, either directly or indirectly, and include each of its limitations. Accordingly, for the reasons give above with respect to claim 1 and 5-6, Applicant respectfully submits claims 7 and 9-10 are patentable over King. Lee has no relevance to the basis of patentability of claims 1 and 5-6. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits claims 7 and 9-10 are patentable over King and Lee.

The Examiner has rejected claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over King in view of Lee as applied to claim 10 and further in view of Bagga. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

As set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits claim 10 is patentable over King in view of Lee. Claim 11 depends on claim 10 and includes each of its limitations. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits claim 11 is also patentable over King in view of Lee. Bagga has no relevance to the patentability of claim 10. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits claim 11 is patentable over King in view of Lee and further in view of Bagga.

The Examiner has rejected claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over French et al. as applied to claims 12-13 and further in view of case law. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

As set forth above, claims 12-13 are patentable over French et al. Claim 14 depends on claim 13 and includes each of its limitations. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits claim 14 is also patentable over French et al. The case law has no relevance to the patentability of

claims 12-13. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits claim 14 is patentable over French et al. in view of the case law.

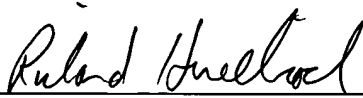
Applicant also submits the Examiner has not met his burden of showing a motivation or suggestion in the prior art to combine the references cited in the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103, and instead has improperly used hindsight reconstruction.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing Amendments and Remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-20. The Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned if there are any questions concerning this Amendment.

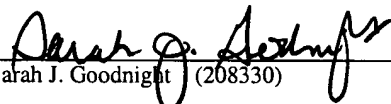
Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING (37 C.F.R. § 1.8a)

I hereby certify that this correspondence is, on the date shown below, being deposited with the United States Postal Service, with first class postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to: MAIL STOP AMENDMENT, Commissioner For Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on September 28, 2004


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